

HYPERICUM GYMNANTHUM Engelm. & Gray  
Least St. John's-wort

FAMILY: Clusiaceae

HABIT: Perennial herb to 9 dm.; flowering late June-September; fruiting July-September.

SIMILAR SPECIES: *Hypericum gymnanthum* resembles *H. majus* and *H. canadense*. *H. gymnanthum* often has wider leaves and a more loose and open inflorescence, with cymes on long peduncles. However, technical characters are required for positive determination.

TOTAL RANGE: Chiefly on the coastal plain; s. NJ to FL and TX, and at scattered more inland stations to PA, OH, IN, IL, and MO.

STATE RANGE (as of 2008): Post-1980 records are from Erie and Pike counties. Pre-1960 specimens exist from Cuyahoga and Ross counties.

HABITAT: Moist to wet sandy, muddy or peaty low grounds, in full sun.

HAZARDS: Overgrowth by woody species through succession.

RECOVERY POTENTIAL: Unknown, but probably poor.

INVENTORY GUIDELINES: Mature flowering or fruiting material is needed for positive identification.

COMMENTS: Thompson (1939) states that this is an Atlantic Coastal Plain species limited in Ohio to the lake plains and adjacent areas in the northern part of the state. The existence of the Ross County specimen demonstrates that it can occur in other areas of the state as well. Thompson (1939) maps this species from Ottawa County. This species is easily overlooked or misidentified. It should be sought throughout the state.

Steyermark (1963) states that the leaves of this species sometimes turn a rose-orange or copper color. He also states that apparent hybrids have been reported between this species and the closely-related and more common *H. mutilum*. Should this be the case in Ohio, it could exacerbate identification problems.

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Steyermark, J.A. 1963. Flora of Missouri. The Iowa State University Press, Ames, IA. 1728 p.

Thompson, I. 1939. Geographical affinities of the flora of Ohio. Am. Midl. Nat. 21: 731-751



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